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(SOVTRDOPS)

(BY JIM ANDERSON)

WASHINGTON (UPI) - A CABINET-LEVEL COMMITTEE OF ADMINISTRATION POLICY EXPERTS RECOMMENDED PRESIDENT CARTER WAIT FOR A SOVIET REPLY TO U.S. PROTESTS BEFORE TAKING ACTION ON THE RUSSIAN COMBAT FORCES IN CUBA, ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID THIS AFTERNOON.

THE PRESIDENTIAL REVIEW COMMITTEE, MEETING IN UNUSUAL SECRECY WITH ONLY CABINET-LEVEL OFFICIALS INVITED, GATHERED AT THE WHITE HOUSE TO PRODUCE A SET OF OPTIONS FOR CARTER. THEIR SESSION LASTED ABOUT 90 MINUTES, WHITE HOUSE OFFICIALS SAID.

ADMINISTRATION OFFICIALS SAID THE EXPERTS FELT ANY AMERICAN REACTION SHOULD BE HELD OFF UNTIL THE SOVIETS OFFICIALLY REPLY TO AN EXPRESSION OF U.S. "CONCERN" OVER THE NEWLY DISCOVERED PRESENCE OF 2,000 TO 3,000 RUSSIAN COMBAT TROOPS IN CUBA.

THE AMERICAN VIEW WAS RELAYED TO THE SOVIET GOVERNMENT LAST WEDNESDAY.

SEN. FRANK CHURCH, D-IDAHO, CHAIRMAN OF THE SENATE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE, SAID HE HAS CONFERRED WITH SECRETARY OF STATE CYRUS VANCE AND PLANS TO DISCUSS THE SITUATION WITH CARTER.

"WHAT POSSIBLE JUSTIFICATION IS THERE FOR SOVIET COMBAT TROOPS IN CUBA?" CHURCH ASKED IN A STATEMENT.

"WE ALSO DESERVE AN ANSWER FROM CUBAN PRESIDENT FIDEL CASTRO AS TO HOW HIS WILLINGNESS TO PERMIT SOVIET TROOPS TO HOLD MILITARY MANEUVERS ON THE ISLAND CONFORMS TO HIS PROFESSED ADHERENCE TO THE PRINCIPLES OF NON-ALIGNMENT."

THE POSSIBLE OPTIONS BEFORE THE ADMINISTRATION RANGE FROM DOING NOTHING TO THE EXTREME STEP OF ESTABLISHING SOME FORM OF BLOCKADE. THE WHITE HOUSE GAVE NO INDICATION OF SPECIFIC OPTIONS PRESENTED BY THE REVIEW COMMITTEE, OTHER THAN THE RECOMMENDATION THE NEXT MOVE SHOULD BE WEIGHED IN LIGHT OF THE SOVIET RESPONSE.

STATE DEPARTMENT OFFICIALS SAID LAST WEEK THE MOST LIKELY FORM OF U.S. RETALIATION, IF ORDERED, WOULD INVOLVE PRESSURES IN THE FIELDS OF COMMERCE OR TRADE WITH THE SOVIET UNION.

IT WAS LEARNED THE REVIEW COMMITTEE MEETING INCLUDED VANCE, NATIONAL SECURITY ADVISOR ZBIGNIEW BRZEZINSKI, DEFENSE SECRETARY HAROLD BROWN AND CIA DIRECTOR STANSFIELD TURNER.

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